



THE Mail Bag NEWS

★ SOLIDARITY
★ EDUCATION
★ ORGANIZATION



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF TRI-VALLEY BRANCH 2902
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS AFL-CIO

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MEMBER: TRI-COUNTIES CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL, AFL-CIO

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Are You Ready to Volunteer?

By James Perryman, President

Hello brothers and sisters. Have you ever wondered why people volunteer? I sometimes reflect on why I volunteer. I believe volunteering in communities makes a difference. It allows the opportunity to gain new skills, build relationships, improve mental and physical health, while providing a stronger sense of purpose. It's a way to give back.

Volunteering provides opportunities to build connection with our neighbors, while learning about the different walks of life. It can also contribute to a healthier and more vibrant community.

The primary drive to volunteer is often a desire to make a positive impact on a cause that you believe in by helping others; this could be motivated by a strong passion for specific issue, a sense of wanting to give back, or simply a desire to help while connecting with others.

There are a ton of skills associated with volunteer work that will be beneficial for both work and life opportunities.

Volunteers are known to have essential and industry-recognized skills, like the ability to work well in a group environment, problem solve, lead groups, work under pressure and time management. Volunteering in general will give you a sense of self-worth and pride in your everyday life. Doing good work for good people installs pride and will make you feel good about yourself and what you are doing. Volunteering also involves taking on extra

responsibility and tasks, which will build your confidence in managing multiple projects.

If what I've mentioned so far in this article motivates you and if you're looking for an opportunity to volunteer but don't know where to begin, I have a few ideas for you. Participation in the NALC "Stamp Out Hunger" food drive is a great place to start volunteering.

NALC Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive

Stamp Out Hunger, the largest single-day food drive in the country, is quickly approaching. Participation in the Stamp Out Hunger across America is an excellent opportunity to volunteer. Many Americans, including millions of children, senior citizens and veterans, are unsure where their next meal will come from. Letter Carriers have helped meet the need by collecting food that Postal patrons leave near their mailboxes on the second Saturday of each May since 1993.

NALC branches deliver the food to local food banks, which often face shortages in spring and summer because holiday donations have been depleted. Most school meal programs are not available during the summer months, making the timing of the Letter Carrier food drive crucial.

I urge every active and retired member of Branch 2902 to immediately begin to work with our coordinators



ARTWORK BY JUSTINE SWINDELL

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Are You Ready to Volunteer?

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Mary Stanley and Walter Williams in preparation for the food drive. Enlist every school, church and civic organization, local governments, both small and large businesses and the news media for support. Volunteering

our time and effort to do what we can to help families on our routes struggling with hunger is something that every NALC member can be proud of, but there is more.

Benefits of Volunteering to be a NALC Shop Steward

The NALC is a voluntary, democratic organization that thrives on the support of its Shop Stewards and its members. A Shop Steward serves as the first line of defense when management violates the contract, misapplies policies, or treats Carriers unfairly. Shop Stewards help ensure employees are treated with dignity and respect.

Stewards make a difference in the workplace by improving the day-to-day working conditions for everyone by addressing problems early, correcting injustices, and holding management accountable. The union is only as strong as its membership involvement. Volunteering as a Steward helps build unity, improves enforcement of the contract, and increases the union's presence in the workplace.

As a Steward you gain valuable knowledge and skills. Stewards learn:

- The National Agreement and JCAM
- Weingarten Rights
- Grievance procedures
- Contract enforcement
- Workplace investigations

These are skills that help Stewards both on and off the job. Stewards are the voice of their co-workers. Many Carriers feel unheard or intimidated when issues arise. A Steward ensures employees have representation and a voice, especially when discipline or contract violations occur.

Stewards prevent discipline and abuse. When management knows a trained Steward is watching, contract violations and unfair treatment often decrease. Representation can stop discipline from escalating unnecessarily.

Being a Steward builds confidence in speaking up, writing professionally, and advocating for others. It's a leadership role that earns respect.

Stewards help prevent favoritism, retaliation, and uneven enforcement of rules. The contract is meant to apply equally to everyone, and the Steward helps ensure that happens. A good Steward contributes to a healthier workplace culture

by resolving disputes through proper channels and ensuring problems are addressed professionally.

Volunteering to be a NALC Shop Steward is not just about filing grievances, it's about protecting the contract, defending Carriers, and making sure everyone goes home with their rights respected. It's one of the most important roles in the United States Postal Service.

If you believe that you have what it takes to represent Carriers, contact me and/or Branch Executive Vice President Albert Reyes to let us know that you're ready to step up to the plate and be considered as a Shop Steward for the NALC. However, volunteering doesn't have to stop here, again there's more.

Letter Carrier Political Fund

The Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF) contribution pays for the NALC to lobby Congress to help prevent the Postal Service from bankruptcy and privatization. This will help secure the rights of Letter Carriers to have good paying jobs, health benefits, and retirement benefits. All of the gains that the union has fought for Letter Carriers can be taken away with the stroke of a political pen.

It's up to us to have a seat at the political table, to fight for the jobs and rights of Letter Carriers. It's not a chance, rather an opportunity to be heard. It's also important for every active/retired Letter Carrier to make small campaign contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund. It provides a path to reach out to political figures that will protect the interest and concerns of Letter Carriers. The LCPF contributes to candidates, *regardless of political affiliation*, who support issues important to Letter Carriers. Only NALC members can contribute to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, it's our PAC.

LCPF contributions cannot be taken from union dues; it is prohibited by federal campaign laws. We only ask that you donate at least \$5.00 a pay period or \$10.00 per month which is a very inexpensive way to ensure the future way of life for Letter Carriers and their families. Letter Carriers can make contributions by using PostalEASE, Electronic Funds Transfer, OPM Annuity or Check and Cash.

There are applications available online that are user friendly to help you set up to make campaign contributions. For more information, please go to nalc.org.

Our political involvement can save the USPS from privatization, bankruptcy, and the loss of jobs for Letter Carriers. The LCPF provides the vehicle to secure our future and the success of the United States Postal Service.

I want to give a heartfelt thanks to all who voluntarily make campaign contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund.

That's all for now, I'll be back with more. God bless you all.

THIS SPELLS
HELP FOR LOTS OF
FAMILIES THIS
YEAR!



LETTER CARRIERS' FOOD DRIVE

PUT YOUR NON-PERISHABLE DONATION IN A BAG BY YOUR MAILBOX.
WE'LL DELIVER IT TO A LOCAL FOOD BANK.

National Partners





Community Service

By Albert Reyes, Executive Vice President

The NALC's nationwide effort to combat hunger started in 1991 during a meeting of leaders, including President Vincent Sombrotto. A brief look into the food drive's history reveals that at the 1991 Arizona State Convention, President Sombrotto viewed a videotape of Branch 576's successful food drive and was inspired.

He was so moved that he wanted to present the concept to the AFL-CIO's Community Services Committee, including the NALC Executive Council. President Sombrotto explained the importance of the drive, telling the groups that if successful, a pilot effort could lead to a larger-scale initiative the next year, and emphasized that such activity would benefit the Postal Service and the Union.

A successful pilot program held in ten cities in October led to immediate plans for nationwide expansion. "It creates a wellspring of good public relations," President Sombrotto said. "It promotes the kind of image we need with the public." The drive was scheduled for Saturday, October 26. On that day, Carriers collected 580,000 pounds of food from Postal customers and delivered it to local community food banks.

As reported in the December 1991 issue of *The Postal Record*, "Donations far exceeded expectations in virtually every city and the amount collected set local food bank records in several areas." Most importantly, input from food banks and pantries indicated that late spring would be the best time, as most food banks begin running low on donations from the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.

A revised food drive was scheduled for May 15, 1993, the second Saturday in May, with the goal of ensuring that at least one NALC branch in each of the 50 states participated. The result was impressive. Over 11 million pounds of food were collected, setting a single-day record in the United States, with more than 220 union branches involved.

Each year, on the second Saturday in May, Letter Carriers in more than 10,000 U.S. cities collect food from Postal customers during the NALC Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive, the nation's largest single-day food drive. Branch 2902 has a tradition of gathering food for those in need as part of its community outreach efforts.

Led by the National Association of Letter Carriers (AFL-CIO), along with the rural carriers, Postal workers, and volunteers, the NALC Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive has collected over 1.82 billion pounds of food during its 30-year-

plus history. Looking ahead to 2026, the NALC Food Drive remains a vital community service event organized by Letter Carriers in many ZIP codes within Branch 2902.

You Play an Important Part

One in ten Americans faces hunger every day. Supporting this cause helps those in your community who need assistance. Inform your customers how to contribute: simply place a box or can of non-perishable food next to their mailbox on the second Saturday in May.

As Letter Carriers, we can help promote the Food Drive by delivering Food Drive cards on the Thursday before the event. Unfortunately, I have seen these cards sit at the Post Office unused and not be handed out. Management should ensure these cards reach every route before the Food Drive.

If management is unsure of when or how to distribute these cards, it is typically the Thursday before the Food Drive. May is quickly approaching, and it's important to recognize the positive impact of everyone's contributions on the second Saturday in May. I want to thank all the Letter Carriers who are working extra hard and going above and beyond for their office on this beautiful day, as well as for their dedicated efforts in helping Stamp Out Hunger.

For more details on the food drive, check out NALC's archives, including the Postal Record, especially the May 2017 issue titled "The First Food Drives."

Keep looking out for each other. If you haven't already, download the NALC app. As always, stay safe out there!





CSUN Scholarship Opportunity

Do you have a student planning to attend CSUN in the Fall of 2026?

The **Guravitz-Shaw Scholarship** is available for children of NALC members. Fred Shaw, a CSUN graduate, retired from the Woodland Hills Post Office after 36 years on the job. Fred and his wife, Lisa Guravitz, then moved to Carpinteria where Fred served on the City Council and Lisa served on the Fire Board. They feel very fortunate to be able to offer this Annual \$1,000 Scholarship.



Requirements for Applicants are as follows:

- Must be a child of members of the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC), whether active, retired, or deceased.
- Priority will be given to applicants whose parent is or was (if deceased) an NALC member from the Tri-Valley Branch 2902.
- Must submit verification of union membership (parent, whether parent is active, retired, or deceased). Please provide a letter from the Union Secretary.
- Must have a GPA greater than or equal to a 2.50.
- Award is intended for the 2026-2027 academic year.
- Students may apply and be awarded more than once.
- All CSUN students (Frosh-Seniors) who meet criteria regardless of financial need or citizenship status are encouraged to apply.
- Apply through the CSUN Financial Aid Office:

Login to the Matador Scholarships portal to begin the general scholarship application and once completed, search for the scholarship with either 'Shaw' or 'Guravitz' or <https://csun.academicworks.com/opportunities/6532>

Application period is March 2, 2026 through June 1, 2026.

One recipient will be randomly drawn from the eligible applicants.



National Day of Action Declared by NALC

By David Hyman, Branch 2902 Trustee & Political Liaison

Greetings, Sisters and Brothers! The national NALC declared Sunday, February 22nd, a National Day of Action in support of a fair contract for Letter Carriers. This event was given late notice from the national NALC and was represented by our branch at the Burbank rally. There were four local branches participating at the Burbank event.

I happened to be in San Francisco that weekend, since I was a delegate to the California Democratic State Convention. As the convention was wrapping up around the same time as the NALC rally was still taking place, I was able to make my way over to participate in the Day of Action.

Some of the sign slogans that were at the rally I attended were:

- 1st CLASS SERVICE, 1st CLASS PAY
- FIGHT LIKE HELL
- HANDS OFF THE PEOPLES' POST OFFICE
- LETTER CARRIERS WORK HARDER, DESERVE HIGHER PAY
- CONTRACT NOW.

I'm sure the Burbank rally had most of those same signs.

There will be a No Kings rally March 28th in support of our country's 250 years as a democracy. It would be great if some of us were able to participate in that event.

For those of you who live in the city of Los Angeles, the L.A. Federation of Labor strongly supports Karen Bass for a second term as Mayor. She has been a strong supporter of labor.

Let's Help Push These Bills Across the Finish Line

Contacting our Representatives in Congress Makes a World of Difference

Progress continues on some of the bills the NALC has been following. The "Protect Our Letter Carriers Act" bill, HR 1065, by Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) and Greg Landsman (D-OH) now has 176 co-sponsors, including three of our service area representatives, Julia Brownley, Brad Sherman, and George Whitesides. The Senate version, S.463, by Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Josh Hawley (R-MO) has eleven co-sponsors, including Adam Schiff. Both bills will increase penalties and assign more prosecutors to protect our Letter

Carriers. Now we have to get Senator Padilla on board.

The anti-privatization resolution, H-Res 70 by Stephen Lynch (D-MA) and Nick Lalota (R-NY) has 231 co-sponsors, a majority in the House. We now have all four of our local members of Congress on this bill. The Senate version, S.147 has seven co-sponsors and was introduced by Gary Peters (D-MI), Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Susan Collins (R-ME), Thom Tillis (R-NC), and Maggie Hassan (D-NH). Again, we need to notify our Senators. Once a majority of the Senate is secured, the bill can move forward.

The Federal Retirement Fairness Act, HR 1522 by Representatives Gerry Connolly (Deceased, D-VA), Nikki Budzinski (D-IL), David Valadao (R-CA) and Don Bacon (R-NE) has 125 co-sponsors including Jorge Rivas, Julia Brownley and George Whitesides. This bill will allow FERS employees that had temporary government positions with no retirement benefits the option to get credit for this temporary time towards their retirement.

The PRO Act, HR 20, was re-introduced by Bobby Scott (D-VA) and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA). This bill protects the right to organize a union and strengthens unions by allowing for collective bargaining under the National Labor Relations Act. There are 214 co-sponsors on this bill including all four of our local members of Congress. The Senate version, S. 852 was introduced by Bernie Sanders (I-VT), and it has 45 co-sponsors on this bill including both our Senators.

The USPS Shipping Equity Act, HR 3011, introduced by Dan Newhouse (R-WA) would allow the USPS the right again to ship alcohol in the mail, something that was legal until prohibition became law over 100 years ago. It's off to a slow start and has ten co-sponsors so far.

Labor Strife

There have been some recent labor strikes. Kaiser Hospital employees and employees of LAUSD. Discussions about these unfair labor practices have been discussed at recent L.A. Federation of Labor meetings. The Kaiser employees' contract expired last September and Kaiser has not been meeting with the national representatives of the several unions to resolve their differences which relate to customer care.



Pictured above is Political Liaison David Hyman as he participates in the NALC "Day of Action" in San Francisco.

The classified employees of LAUSD average \$35,000 a year and this labor dispute revolves around their weak pay raise offer.

The Southern California Gas Company is looking to again close down local offices. This proposal is not consumer friendly, and this is being challenged by their union. Local offices are used by working people to pay their bills or discuss service issues. Closure would impact the poor, requiring them to pay their bills at a Walmart and pay a service fee. Not everyone has access to a computer. This proposal would

also lead to a reduction of union jobs. Needless to say, labor has been active at the PUC hearings on this issue to prevent local office closures.

It's almost time for the food drive and I look forward to it every year, helping those in need.

Spring training is here. The Dodgers are three to one favorites to win a third world series in a row. We'll probably look to do another Branch 2902 visit to Dodgers Stadium this season. Details to come later



Family Protection

By Chris Alessi, MBA/NSBA Representative

As spring arrives it would be a good time to evaluate your life insurance needs for your family's future protection. MBA insurance products offer policies that can suit your individual needs based on your families particular lifestyle.

According to the life insurance marketing research association, it is reported that 45% of widows and 37% of widowers say their spouse was *inadequately insured*. One or two years after a spouse's death, half of the widows and one-third of the widowers are just getting by financially. It is reported that 12% of United States households would have immediate trouble meeting everyday living expenses if a primary wage earner died, and another 15% would have difficulty keeping up with expenses after several months. 25% of household heads don't feel they have a plan in place to provide a decent standard of living for their families if they died tomorrow.

Research shows that 24% of Americans over the age of 65 experience death of a spouse. Widowhood often has a negative impact on the finances of the surviving spouse. The Social Security Administration reports the rate of poverty among elderly widows is three to four times higher than their married counter partners of the same age. Even widows that aren't impoverished often face major financial adjustments such as decreased income, loss of health Insurance, or the need to relocate.

This is why at least once a year you should review your income and debt ratio based on life's changes to see if you would have enough income to live a good quality of life for your family if your loved one passed away and there is loss of their income.

Some Important Expenses to Consider Are:

- (1) **Final expenses** - one time expenses incurred by your death, including funeral costs, legal fees, and estate taxes.
- (2) **Outstanding debt** - to be paid off at your death.
- (3) **Readjustment expense** - to cover a transition period, including child care, additional homemaking help, and training for a surviving spouse.
- (4) **Dependency expense** - until all children are self-supporting
- (5) **Educational expense** - annual college cost in current dollars multiplied by the number of years and children to attend.
- (6) **Life income for the surviving spouse** - after all the children are self-supporting, estimated annual amount desired minus annual income from employment.
- (7) **Retirement income for the surviving spouse** - annual income desired in current dollars minus Social Security and any pension income.

Now is the time to plan your purchase of life insurance coverage. The financial soundness of the insurer is a very critical concern. You have to have assurance that the company will be around in case you aren't. Your union's MBA was established in 1891 and is a non-profit fraternal benefit arm of the NALC established to provide low cost life insurance to its members. As of May 2025, our MBA is financially sound with *\$257 million in assets and \$40 million in reserves*.

Always review your coverage every few years or when changes occur, such as buying a home or having children. You can review all the different types of insurance plans at NALC.ORG under Member Services, or you can call me anytime to make sure your coverage is always aligned with your financial needs. You can also call the MBA at (202) 638-4318.

In closing, I wish all of our members and their families a great spring. Be safe and God Bless you.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

204b's Bidding for Bargaining Unit Positions

M-00016 Pre-arb, NC-NAT-8581

Letter Carriers temporarily detailed to a supervisory position (204B) may not bid on vacant Letter Carrier Craft duty assignments while so detailed.

M-00552 Step 4

October 24, 1983, H1N-4B-C 16840

While an employee is in a 204B supervisory status, he or she cannot exercise a bid preference for a temporary assignment available under Article 41, Section 2.B.3 or 2.B.4.

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Membership Pins

The following members are invited to the next General Meeting or the next Retiree's Luncheon (if you are a retiree) to be presented with their membership pins.

Please call the Union Hall at (818) 700-9615 and let us know if you will be present to accept yours.



45 Years

Jose Betancourt
Mary Ellenberger
Susan Jensen
Russell Kennedy
Kristen Kieldrup
Jerry Kinkade
Audrey Topley-Harvey
Laurel Vasile

40 Years

Marty Barton
Gonzalo DeLeon Jr
Ernestine Hernandez
Carrie Hodge
Carmen Lucio
James Morris
Marion Mutrie-Flowers
Larry Ortega
Tommie Pryor Jr

35 Year

Robert Beattie
Ronald Erb
Michael Guidicessi
Marie McTavish
Philip Navarro
Mark Perkins
Mary Stanley
Edward Ward
Walter Williams III

30 Years

Beth Feeler
Lisje Limpo
Lisa Lopez
Timothy Moriarty

25 Years
Gregory Hines
Teresa Hunter
Sun Kim
Elayna McDonald

Vincent Medina
Alejandro Mejia
Ismael Munoz
Alejandro Parra
Robert Quirarte
Francisco Robles Jr
Moises Sandoval
Ricardo Santibanez
Dale Strawmyer
Chung Truong
Ismael Vivas

The *Mail Bag News* is the official publication of Tri-Valley Branch 2902 (Chatsworth, California) of the National Association of Letter Carriers. All opinions expressed are those of the individual author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the NALC or its officers. The *Mail Bag News* welcomes articles and letters to the editor; however the editorial staff of The *Mail Bag News* assumes complete authority to decide which letters are presented for publication. Anonymous articles are not accepted. Permission is hereby granted to re-print articles. We just ask that you give the author and the publication appropriate credit.

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Letter Carrier Political Fund

By making a contribution to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, you are doing so voluntarily with the understanding that your contribution is not a condition of membership in the National Association of Letter Carriers or of employment by the Postal Service, nor is it part of union dues. You have a right to refuse to contribute without any reprisal. The Letter Carrier Political Fund will use the money it receives to contribute to candidates for federal office and undertake other political spending as permitted by law. Your selection shall remain in full force and effect until cancelled. Contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. Federal law prohibits the Letter Carrier Political Fund from soliciting contributions from individuals who are not NALC members, executive and administrative staff or their families. Any contribution received from such an individual will be refunded to that contributor. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 per calendar year. Any guideline amount is merely a suggestion, and an individual is free to contribute more or less than the guideline suggests and the Union will not favor or disadvantage anyone by reason of the amount of their contribution or their decision not to contribute.

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Chatsworth Chief S.S.	Alejandro Medina	
Fillmore Chief S.S.	Kathi Albritten	
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Ojai Chief S.S.	Call Union Hall	
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Thousand Oaks Chief S.S.	Alex Lopez	
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	Rochelle Harvey	
Alternate S.S.	Mary Stanley	
Newbury Park S.S.	Jessel Barrios	
Ventura Chief S.S.	Kathi Albritten	
East Ventura S.S.	Kathi Albritten	
Woodland Hills Chief S.S.	Call Union Hall	

THE MAIL BAG NEWS

NALC BRANCH 2902

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RETIREEES LUNCH RAFFLE AT 12:30

MARCH

Where: Golden Panda
1825 Madera Rd.
Simi Valley
When: Tuesday, March 17, 2026
Time: 11:00 am to 1:00 pm

APRIL

Where: Golden Panda
1825 Madera Rd.
Simi Valley
When: Tuesday, April 21, 2026
Time: 11:00 am to 1:00 pm

Calendar of Events

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| MAR 17 | Retiree Luncheon 11:00 am
Golden Panda-Simi Valley |
| MAR 19 | Regular Branch Meeting 7:00 pm
Union Hall-Chatsworth |
| APR 2 | Executive Board Meeting 6:00 pm
Executive Council Meeting 7:00 pm |
| APR 16 | Regular Branch Meeting 7:00 pm
Union Hall-Chatsworth |
| APR 21 | Retiree Luncheon 11:00 am
Golden Panda-Simi Valley
CANCELLED |
| MAY 7 | Executive Board Meeting 6:00 pm
Executive Council Meeting 7:00 pm |
| MAY 9 | NALC FOOD DRIVE |
| MAY 10 | Mothers Day |
| MAY 19 | Regular Branch Meeting 7:00 pm
Union Hall-Chatsworth |

